

INDIANAPOLIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE

A CHARTER SCHOOL EMPHASIZING CORE KNOWLEDGE AND THE ARTS

CHARTER PROPOSAL

OCTOBER 8, 2001

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The Board of Directors of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is pleased to submit this Charter Proposal for your review and consideration. The proposed school will emphasize an education in core knowledge areas and the arts. As noted by a leading arts education advocate:

The evidence of the value of arts education is all around us: In well-designed cities, in creative competitive workplaces, in schools where academic excellence is the norm, in the eloquence of our most noted leaders, and in the faces of the children who will lead us into the 21st Century.

- Robert L. Lynch, President & CEO - Americans For The Arts

We are committed to the principles outlined in the quote above:

The value of the arts can be seen everywhere,

Art plays a pivotal role in the development of our cities, communities, and companies,

Fine and performing arts are an integral part of educational excellence,

Artistic expression and artistic freedom form a foundation for our nation's leadership, and

A commitment to a rich arts-based education plays an important part in the development of the children, who will grow up to be the leaders of tomorrow.

After serious deliberation about the type of school to create and the curriculum to implement, the Board of Directors chose an education program based on the widely acclaimed Core Knowledge Sequence, with a focus on fine and performing arts. According to a group of researchers from Teachers College Columbia University, there is a significant relationship between a rich in-school arts program and a student's creative, cognitive, and personal competencies that are needed for academic success.¹ In particular the researchers noted improvements in creative thinking, intellectual flexibility, imagination, problem solving, and intuitive thinking skills among students in a rich arts environment as compared to those in non-arts intensive programs. The researchers also noted that the study of arts and artistic expression was most effective in schools where arts instruction is rich and continuous and is supported by school administrators and staff.

By coupling an arts-rich program with the fundamental instruction areas from the Core Knowledge Sequence, the School will create a learning environment that provides students with the fundamentals of a sound education along with a rich supplement that sparks their creative instincts and develops their higher level learning skills. This combination of a Core Knowledge

¹ Judith Burton, Robert Horowitz, and Hal Abeles, *Learning In and Through the Arts: Curriculum Implications*, Center for Arts Education Research – Teachers College, Columbia University (July 1999).

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Sequenced based curriculum and a fine and performing arts emphasis has produced positive results across the country.

We look forward to working with you to build a world-class academic institution to serve the children and families of the Indianapolis metropolitan area. What follows is a proposal for achieving that goal.

I. INFORMATION ABOUT INDIANAPOLIS ACADEMY OF EXCELLENCE.

The Board of Directors of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is developing this school to provide Indianapolis children with the opportunity for a high quality education. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will provide equitable opportunities for all students to acquire an education that links rigorous academic content, advanced technology, and proven educational methods to ensure students are prepared to succeed. As part of our program, the School will replace the culture of low expectations that permeates traditional public schools² with an atmosphere of excellence in which students are given high expectations and the support and tools with which to succeed.

As part of our effort to create an atmosphere of excellence, the School has contracted with Beacon Education Management, Inc., a national education management organization with a diverse geographic and demographic portfolio of school operations, to assist in developing and operating the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence. Beacon will provide a variety of management services to the school under the direction and control of the Board of Directors. One of the contributions Beacon has already made to the development of the School is the integration of the Beacon Lightpoints Curriculum™, which based on the Core Knowledge Sequence and effective instructional methods. With the Board's dedication and leadership and Beacon's experience and expertise, we will create a world-class academic institution.

A. Description of the Founding Group

The founding team is comprised of a group of civic-minded community leaders with over 60 combined years of educational experience and significant managerial and leadership expertise. The founding Board of Directors is comprised of:

Dr. Robert Abene – Former President of Marian College.

Maggie Brents – Member of the City-County Council from the 16th District.

David Keen – Lawyer and Certified Public Accountant.

Louise Goggans - Assistant Professor of Physical Education IUPUI.

For more detailed information about the experience of each of the Board members, please see the Leadership Information included in this Charter Proposal at **TAB 9**.

² E.g., Michele McNeil Solida, *Panel lowers passing grade for schools*, INDIANAPOLIS STAR, September 27, 2001 (stating that under a weakened accountability plan approved by the Governor's Education Roundtable "[a]n Indiana school with only half of its students passing state tests will be labeled as making acceptable progress").

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It is the Board's goal to continue actively recruiting individuals with relevant experience to join our board. The Board will strive to create a board that reflects the demographic composition of Indianapolis. As part of this effort, the Board intends to involve the president of our parent advisory team as an ex-officio member of our board of directors and to seek active parent involvement on the various board committees that we will create, such as the fundraising, admissions, and hiring committees. The Board also is recruiting additional board members to provide us with the diversity of skills and backgrounds that will make our board a constantly improving manager and leader for our school. The Board is working to create a board development package that will include the qualifications and backgrounds of the existing board members, the qualifications and backgrounds the School would like to add to the Board, along with a detailed description of the expectations and responsibilities of our Board members.

In addition to the educational, business, and professional expertise of the board members, the leadership team includes the experience and expertise of Beacon Education Management, Inc. Beacon operates 29 charter schools across the country and has a proven track record of success. Beacon has assembled a team of school developers and operators to work directly with our Board and the school's administration and staff to ensure that appropriate attention is given to every detail of developing and operating our school. If you would like more information about Beacon, please see the information about Beacon located at **TAB 4D** and visit their web site: www.beaconedu.com.

About Robert Abene

Dr. Abene is the former president of Marian College in Indianapolis. He has a distinguished career as an education and as an educational administrator and fundraiser. Dr. Abene received his Bachelor of Science degree from Loyola University in 1968, his Master of Arts in Communications Disorders from DePaul University in 1970, his Master of Science from the University of St. Francis in 1975, and his Doctorate in Education from Loyola University in 1992. In addition to his significant educational experience, Dr. Abene brings a wealth of leadership, management, and fundraising experience and expertise to the Board. He will serve as the founding Chair of the Board of Directors.

About Maggie Brents

Ms. Brents is a distinguished member of the City-County Council from the 16th District, which is one of the areas we are exploring as a possible school location. She brings a detailed understanding of area politics and policies to our Board as well as her leadership abilities. Ms. Brents will serve as the founding Vice Chair of the Board of Directors.

About David Keen

Mr. Keen is a lawyer, certified public accountant, certified cash manager, certified financial manager, and certified management accountant. He has significant experience in both public and private accounting. He received his Juris Doctorate from the Indiana University School of Law in May 2000. Mr. Keen will serve as the Board's founding Secretary/Treasurer.

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About Louise Goggans

Louise Goggans is an Assistant Professor of Physical Education at IUPUI. She received her B.A. from Indiana University in 1956, her M.S. Ed. from Indiana University in 1969, and her D.M.Sc. from the Indiana University Medical Center in 1982. Ms. Goggans will serve as one of the founding Directors.

B. Community Partnerships

The Board believes that a school must be connected to the community it seeks to serve. To be truly connected to the school, the community needs to be involved in the school in as many ways as possible and the school must serve the community in as many ways as possible. To guide this process of engagement, the School proposes the following standards for parent and community involvement: (i) communication between home and the schools is regular, two-way and meaningful; (ii) parenting skills are promoted and supported; (iii) parents play an integral part in assisting student learning; (iv) parents are welcomed at the school, and their support and assistance are sought; (v) parents are full partners in the decisions that affect their children and families; (vi) community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning; and (vii) the school is a center for community activities.

Although the Board has not yet selected the specific location for the school, it intends to make the facility a focal point for the neighborhood and community. As mentioned in the Executive Summary, the Board is considering a small facility at 3549 Boulevard Place that might house a portion of the program; however, we continue to conduct our site selection process. The Board is currently focusing on several options in and around Center township. The Board of Directors will consider keeping the school facility open evenings, weekends and during break periods for student, family, and community use. In addition, the School's facility will be made available to student and parent/guardian groups that want to use the facility for educational purposes, for discussion groups, and for other programs that may be offered in cooperation with third party organizations and institutions. The School will seek to enter into agreements with community-based organizations to allow for the use of the School's facilities to provide such services as: family literacy programs, job search services, family support services, before and after school programs, and adult basic education, health and social services, and literacy and GED programs. The Board believes that by creating a neighborhood center at the School's facility we will be able to carry out the School's vision for intertwining the education of our children and the development of our community. The Board will explore bringing Title 5 Seniors into the school through the Indianapolis Career Program, which may help the School provide an intergenerational educational perspective to the students and achieve the objective of making the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence a community resource.

II. OUR VISION

A. Mission Statement

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will offer all students, including at-risk students, in grades K-12 the opportunity to experience the arts in an academic environment and will encourage students to reach their full potential while encouraging racial harmony. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will provide students with appropriate opportunities to develop their character, to achieve their academic potential, and to experience personal growth

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through academically rigorous, content-rich educational programs using a balanced instructional approach built on a teacher directed, project based learning model.

B. Statement of Need

The Board has reviewed the performance of students in the Indianapolis metropolitan area as reported in various trade publications and publicly available reports. The available data shows that as recently as 1998 there were a number of local urban elementary schools where fewer than 10 percent of the 6th graders were passing the Essential Skills portion of the ISTEP. In addition the available data shows that there were few local urban elementary schools where more than 40 percent of the sixth graders were passing the Essential Skills portion of the ISTEP and that the vast majority of elementary school in the IPS system were testing in the bottom quartile on the ISTEP. In reviewing the data the Board has concluded that the performance of local urban elementary students is due in part to the need for systemic change in the local public education model. The Board believes that the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence can and will help spur innovation in public education. The Board also believes the School's fine and performing arts focused, Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum will help students break the cycle of low performance.

Furthermore, the Board has studied the demographic and socio-economic data that is available for Marion county and Indianapolis. An analysis of that data shows that the students in the community the School will serve are comprised of some of the most challenging students to educate. The typical classroom is filled with a mix of students and cultural backgrounds; however, the typical classroom tends to have a large population of students who come from the lower quartile of the county's socio-economic scale. In addition, the typical classroom has a high number of students that come from challenging home situations, such as single parent families and troubled neighborhoods. Also, a typical classroom has a number of students that are not primary speakers of English.

The Board is sensitive to the needs of the students that will be in our classrooms and are committed to providing them with academic and non-academic support. As discussed in more detail elsewhere in this proposal, the Board has selected a curriculum with a proven track record of serving students in urban environments, developed an approach for the School that will foster the use of the School's facility to address the needs of both student and their families, and oriented the School to focus on the individual needs of each student, whether academically gifted or challenged or from the highest or lowest socio-economic background. The School will develop an Individual Learning Plan for each student that will help the School create a custom educational approach to meet each student's needs.

The Board has chosen to partner with Beacon Education Management because they share our belief that students need to acquire the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to be responsible citizens and effective workers in the global workforce of the 21st Century. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will operate under some basic tenets, listed below, in order to meet the needs and challenges that face our youth. For a discussion of how the education program has performed in urban settings, see the discussion in Section III.A under the heading "Demonstrated Results Supported by Research".

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All children deserve access to a high quality education measured by international benchmarks of academic excellence. This is their birthright and our responsibility in a free society.

The proposed core curriculum consists of rigorous study at all grade levels in the five subject areas deemed essential by the *Goals 2000 Program* of the U.S. Department of Education: history and geography, English Language Arts, mathematics, science and environmental studies.

Fine arts, study skills and technology will be integrated throughout the education program. All students will learn a second language – Spanish, and possibly French and sign language. Health education is taught at all grade levels and integrated into the curriculum where appropriate. The course of studies will align with and meet State Standards. The Board estimates that this will take 70% of the school day/year, leaving 30% to expand upon core studies or to add expanded and enriched instruction in other areas. The School will use the flexible portion of each day first to ensure that all of its students have basic competencies in the fundamental areas of reading and positive decision making. The School also will use the flexible portion of its calendar to emphasize fine and performing arts skills.

Each child learns in a unique way and on a personal timetable. The curriculum must guarantee every student's continuous progress toward the proposed educational goals.

The proposed program inverts the traditional formula of American education that often promotes students from grade to grade regardless of academic growth. The Board believes that demonstrated learning, rather than measured time, is the true benchmark. Some students will need more time to achieve academic benchmarks, including after school and summer programs. But all students can and will be expected to learn and to meet high academic standards. The School will develop an *Individual Learning Plan* for each student. This plan includes the standards, objectives, content and activities that make up each student's program in a given time period. The school year will be at least 190 days, with additional time provided during school inter-sessions for those students who need the support or who desire enrichment.

Children learn best when they are confronted with knowledge and problems that have real-world value and when they can share these newfound interests with one another and with their communities.

The Board believes that the School must work with families to develop deeply ingrained habits of mind and character rather than simply load students with short-lived facts and information. The Board will foster a spirit of inquiry that encourages students to incorporate and connect content from a variety of disciplines as they explore the real-world applications of their new knowledge.

Children learn best when they are guided by professionals who combine knowledge of their subject with a nurturing and caring demeanor and a compassion for youth.

The faculty will be nurturing, optimistic and accountable. In return, they will be given considerable freedom to teach and develop instructional strategies to help each student meet

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ambitious goals. Most of all, each teacher will be tolerant and accepting, recognizing that student 'mistakes' are a sign of attempted learning and must be used to foster, rather than blunt, individual intellectual growth.

Children with access to instructional technology are free to educate themselves without the traditional constraints of time and space.

Computers will bring the world into the classroom and create an ongoing partnership between the school and its students. Unlimited interaction among the faculty, the student body, and the curriculum is a vital and cost-effective component of the proposed program. By offering students the skills necessary to effectively utilize technology, students can educate themselves without the traditional constraints of time and space.

Character development necessitates clear and consistent instruction across the curriculum and requires the exhibition of ethical conduct by every member of the school community.

The School will be a safe, secure place where everyone assumes a high degree of civility and responsibility. The program will focus on the understanding and application of knowledge and simultaneously build on a principled curriculum that is inspirational, encourages students to be self actualized in their behavior, and exposes them to heroes and great deeds. Discussions about what is right and what is wrong will help them act properly while in school and at home, and they will develop into role models for the subsequent generations.

Children growing up in the American democracy must understand and practice its responsibilities as freely and fully as they appreciate its rights.

Never in our history has it been more important for our children to understand the rights, responsibilities, and opportunities that the American system of government affords them. Our curriculum and school atmosphere, which emphasizes community, will counter the growing illiteracy about public issues in American society and will help our students more fully understand the great issues and challenges that face our nation. The practice of effective, responsible citizenship within the school will extend, in turn, to the home community and ultimately, to the nation. In this way, our invaluable and increasingly imperiled democracy will sustain itself from one generation to the next.

Children need both the support of their community and the opportunity to serve and contribute to its well-being.

The School will enlist the support of local service agencies, especially for high-risk students. At the same time, the Board believes that students need to learn to give something back to the community. At a young age, this lesson can be taught in simple ways that create both a school community and a greater community of which the School is a part. Students, through a systematic program of service learning, will see their classroom civics lessons come to life as they help local social service, civic and religious organizations.

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No matter how well a school serves its children, its influence can be maximized with the strong support and involvement of parents and guardians in every aspect of its program.

The Board believes that those who raise children are always their most important and most formative teachers. No one understands the needs of a child better than a parent, grandparent, or guardian. To be as effective as possible on behalf of their students, we must consider families and concerned adults to be their greatest allies. They must take an active role in the children's intellectual, emotional, and physical development. Therefore, parental commitment, full participation and involvement in a school are expected and will be encouraged.

Parent programs will be developed with other community agencies and offered at the school in the evening and on days when school is not in session. Families will be provided with access to computers, classes, recreation and other resources at the school. Families also will be provided with instruction on how to effectively use these resources.

C. School Characteristics

Initially, the Board is seeking to establish an enrollment in grades K-4 of about 333 students (3 classes per grade at an average of 22 students per class). The program may be expanded thereafter to a maximum of grades pre-K through 12, based on demonstrated interest, with the approval of the Board of Directors. In addition, the Board of Directors may expand the program to include additional classes per grade based on demonstrated interest. Class sizes in Pre-K, if offered, will be between 12 and 18 students. Class sizes in Kindergarten and Grade One will be approximately 18 students. In Grades Two through Six, class size will be approximately 25 students. Class sizes for the upper grades also will be approximately 25 students. The Board believes that an elementary school program provides the best place to begin to build a long-term educational partnership with students, families, and communities. In addition to the general focus on fine and performing arts, the School will place a significant focus on the development of reading and language skills.

School Calendar

The school will feature a core 190 day school year. The traditional instructional day will begin at approximately 8:30 a.m. and end at approximately 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. In the event the School offers a Pre-K program, the Board will select a calendar and class day in connection with the implementation of that program. The Board anticipates allowing parents, grandparent, or guardians to drop students off as early as 7:00 a.m. and to pick up their students as late as 6:00 p.m. The Board will explore opportunities to develop a quality before and after care program in conjunction with local institutions to allow our students to continue learning before and after the formal school day.

The Board also plans to explore opportunities to enhance the educational value of instructional time by making the School a place students want to be. To further this goal the Board will explore implementing a multiple recess school day and other structured programs to create an enjoyable learning environment. A sample of the before and after care enrichment programs the School may offer include:

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Activity Based Learning - Little Scientists is a series of experiments based on the content and processes found in the curriculum. Dr. Heidi Gold-Dworkin, a member of the Nobel Prize winning team at Yale University, developed the program;

Clubs and Activities - These activities may be offered at no charge and may be integrated into the "wrap around" child care program. In a wrap around program, children are provided with services at the same site before and after school; and

Parent Education Classes – These classes may be based upon programs such as the USDE's Helping Your Child series. The series provides information books for parents on different academic and non-academic matters. The series is available in multiple languages.

The total number of instructional time is estimated to be over 1,140 hours each academic year. In addition to this core calendar, the Board will explore offering additional educational programs to students outside of the normal school calendar, such as summer, morning, evening, and weekend programs.

A Day in the Life of Our Students

The School's typical students, John and Michelle, will arrive at school between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m., when their mother drops them off on her way to work. Upon arrival they will have an opportunity to participate in one of several structured programs, which may include a science or math club, a chess club, a physical education program, or others, depending on the types of programs the school ultimately decides to offer. During the morning activities time, students will have an opportunity to have breakfast as part of the School's food service program. At 8:30 Michelle and John will be in their classroom ready to begin their academic day. The first thing the class does is say the Pledge of Allegiance together and take their seats. Once seated, they will begin their studies. John and Michelle's class will spend the morning working on a project. For example, Michelle and John's 4th grade teacher, Ms. Hubbard, may begin the day with a history and geography project the way that she begins every new project: by making a mental map. She asks class members to draw maps of Africa based on their knowledge of the continent, and using Spanish, fill in as many countries, rivers, deserts and products that they know about. When they are finished, Ms. Hubbard puts a map of Africa on the overhead projector and fills it in with information provided by the students: the Nile River, the Sahara desert, Nelson Mandela, diamonds and pyramids. Ms. Hubbard then asks the class to take out their journals and write in them questions that they would like to have answered about Africa, such as "Who built the pyramids?" "Why were the pyramids built?" "How were the pyramids built?" "How big are the deserts in Africa?" "Do people live there?" "Why are there so many diamonds in Africa?" "What do people in Africa eat?"

After a period of time for reflection, Ms. Hubbard asks each student to tell her one of his or her questions. She writes these on the board. Ms. Hubbard notes that the questions fall into many different strands, including: people and their environment; cultures and identities; and economics, production and distribution.

John, Michelle, and other students will work together in small groups studying the "Valley of the Kings" in Luxor, Egypt. On their worktable they have a map of Egypt on which

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they have located the Valley. They are next listening to an audiotape of a reading of Howard Carter's exploration of King Tutankhamen's tomb.

" Never before in the whole history of excavation had such an amazing site been seen. Imagine how objects in the tomb appeared to us as we looked down upon them from our spyhole in the doorway, casting our beam of a torch light from one group of objects to another...."³

When they are finished with this passage, they write a summary of this part of the story in their journals, listing questions that they wish to answer. They will then work in small groups to conduct preliminary internet-based research to find the answers to their questions. Once they have collected the research, they will work together using Microsoft PowerPoint to develop a draft presentation that they will share with the class later in the week.

Once the teams of students have completed their work on the Africa project for the morning, they will take a short break to allow the students to release some energy and refocus for the rest of the morning's projects.

Around noon, John and Michelle's class will move to the lunchroom where they will eat either a meal they have brought with them or one of the meals offered at the school. During this time they will be able to interact with students in other classes and share thoughts on the mornings projects, look forward to what they will learn in the afternoon, or simply enjoy visiting with their friends. As the end of their lunch period approaches, one of the other 4th grade teachers may stop by their table to engage them in a quick conversation before everyone returns to the classroom.

The afternoon session will involve several additional projects, which may use a scientific discovery as the basis to learn about the history of the time when the discovery was made, the importance of the discovery on our culture and our understanding of the world, and may involve reproducing the experiment that led to the discovery.

At the end of the normal school day, 3:30 p.m., John and Michelle will move from their classroom to participate in one of the after-care programs that is offered at the school. The time will be spent with their classmates and students from other classes and grades. Once John and Michelle's mother arrives at school at 5:30 p.m., they will head home together to eat dinner, spend time as a family, and do some homework that is designed to engage both the student and the family in the learning process. They will then complete the family's nightly routine and get a good night's sleep to get them ready for the following day.

III. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROVIDED

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence, a public charter school, plans to initially serve children in grades Kindergarten through Grade 4. When and if funding is available, the School may seek to offer pre-kindergarten classes. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will consider future expansion of size and grade levels after the first year, depending on facilities

³ Howard Carter, Tutankhamen's Treasure, an abridged version of The Tomb of Tuntankhamen published in 1923.

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and local input. The school will seek a diverse population reflective of the rich cultural heritage of Indianapolis.

The school will provide an innovative program based upon:

A fine and performing arts focus that permeates the education program through our project-based learning model.

The integration of technology, teacher-presented instruction and project-based learning.

An education program based upon New Standards and the Core Knowledge Sequence.

A longer school day and school year.

Active parental involvement in each child's education program and in school governance.

The integration of instructional strategies, governance and finance within a unified vision.

A systems-based approach to quality.

A. Educational Philosophy

Our educational philosophy and our education program are based upon: teacher-presented instruction, project-based learning, and integrated technology.

Teacher Presented Instruction

Teacher presented instruction is used to teach phonics, reading, and basic mathematics skills. Teacher directed instruction might involve the whole class, small groups, or individuals. Using the presentation method, the teacher is the sole source of instruction and information. Students are then required to apply these skills in a project-based learning environment.

Project-Based Learning

Project-based learning is a pedagogical approach that places the student in the role of researcher, creator, interpreter, and presenter. In project-based classrooms, the teacher presents the problems to students, which requires them to become actively involved in the learning process. The problems are often interdisciplinary in nature and direct the students to read, write, compute, research, and present. Our teaching staff will design projects with the assistance of Beacon's national curriculum consultants. Project-based learning is a microcosm of the way in which students will learn and work in the 21st century. Core subjects are taught through both project-based and teacher-presented instruction as may be appropriate for the learning styles of the children. Project-based learning ensures that teachers employ strategies which require students to use higher order thinking, engage in substantive conversations on a routine basis, and explore content in depth to connect through their learning to the outside world.

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Integrated Technology

Technology will permeate the instructional program. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will provide access to the latest technology for staff and student use. In addition, the school will provide parents with access to these same resources when school is not in session. The School's education program makes use of technology to deliver and to manage instruction. Technology is also available for all students to use as learning tools in the classroom. Specific examples of how the School will use technology include:

A laptop computer for every classroom teacher.

A high computer to student ratio.

Technology integrated into the learning process.

Internet resources available to all students in every grade level.

Student use of technology as part of the project-based learning process.

Academically proven content and software.

Integration of technology and learning using NetSchools.

One of the most common mistakes that schools make when evaluating and implementing technology in the school and the classroom is to focus on the hardware and pay little attention to the software, content, and training that it takes to transform a computer into a learning tool. The School will focus on the part of the technology equation that has the biggest impact on the education of our students and will make our investment in technology a strong, thoughtful, and committed effort to use technology in the most effective manner to increase and improve learning. For example, with Beacon's assistance, the School will offer advanced placement courses online for grades 11 and 12. Students can earn school credit and prepare for Advanced Placement™ exams by utilizing the multimedia and interactive capabilities of the Internet. AP qualified teachers will provide instruction. Students will complete assignments at their own pace, while online teachers interact with each student via e-mail or phone to answer any questions, monitor progress and evaluate assignments and tests.

Individual Learning Plan for Each Student

Using the framework described above, core subjects are taught through both project-based and teacher-presented instruction as may be appropriate for the learning styles of the children. Each student receives an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that outlines the student's goals and expected minimum achievement levels for the year. A learning style inventory is used to ascertain the student's strengths and needs. The School's staff will revise the plans as needed throughout the year. Grade levels will also be organized as families so as to promote social skills, greater flexibility for instruction and a positive school climate.

At risk students who are not reaching expected benchmarks will receive support based upon their Individual Learning Plan from tutors, computer-based instruction, mentors and other support services. Additional services may be offered to students as part of our before and after care programs or on the weekends. In addition these students will have additional learning time through the extended school day/year. A free pre-opening summer program may be

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offered to these students if resources permit. The Board will explore other options to provide expanded services to students who need additional support.

Demonstrated Results Supported by Research

The School's philosophy and program are well regarded in research circles and have a proven track record of success in urban environments that are similar to Indianapolis. Research studies of the effects of implementation of a Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum, like the Beacon Lightpoints™ Curriculum, have been very favorable. According to the Core Knowledge website:

The evidence suggests that the Core Knowledge Sequence fosters both excellence and equity. The curriculum fosters excellence by improving academic performance and laying the groundwork for future learning. It fosters equity by helping to narrow the achievement gap between academic "haves" and "have nots" and lifting low-achieving students up toward the mean.

In May 2000, the first phase of an independent study of the effects of Core Knowledge Sequence based curricula in public schools was conducted by administrators in the Oklahoma City public school system. The study examines the effects of implementing a Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum in grades 3, 4, and 5 using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills as the performance measurement tool. The Core Knowledge students made significantly greater one-year gains in all subject areas than students using a non-Core Knowledge based curriculum.

In 1999, a three-year study of Core Knowledge schools concluded that, when a Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum is fully implemented, students achieve higher scores on norm-referenced tests and on criterion-referenced tests of Core Knowledge topics than students at comparison schools. The report calls these academic gains "educationally meaningful." The study also concluded that a Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum provides students with "a broad base of knowledge and a rich vocabulary, gives students the knowledge necessary for higher learning, and creates in many students a strong desire to learn more."

A separate study, looking at student performances in Maryland Core Knowledge schools, determined that third graders in Core Knowledge schools made significantly greater three-year gains than students in control schools and students throughout the State of Maryland. The study reports that Core Knowledge students outperformed statewide averages in all six areas of the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program. The largest gains against the state average on the MSPAP were in writing (+10.5%), reading (+8.6%), and language (+7.4%). Significant gains were also reported in math (+5.9%), social studies (+5.2%), and science (+5.1%).

A research team from the Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University, has established the positive effects of the Core Knowledge Sequence. Sam Stringfield, Amanda Datnow, Geoffrey Borman, and Laura Rachuba documented their findings in the report, *National Evaluation of Core Knowledge Sequence Implementation: Final Report*.⁴

⁴ This report can be found at <http://www.coreknowledge.org>.

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The groups found that some of the key factors in implementation were:

- Decision making autonomy was helpful;

- Common planning time for teachers greatly aided implementation;

- State and district demands related to standards and accountability, and more specifically, to standardized tests, constrained implementation at most sites.

The researchers also found that the following were "associated with Core Knowledge implementation":

For students, Core Knowledge:

- Provides a broad base of knowledge and a rich vocabulary;

- Motivates students to learn and create a strong desire to learn more;

- Promotes the acquisition of knowledge necessary for higher learning.

For the school, Core Knowledge:

- Provides an academic focus and encourages consistency in instruction;

- Provides a plan for coherent, sequenced learning from grade to grade;

- Promotes a community of learners--adults and children;

- Become an effective tool for lesson planning and communication among teachers and with parents;

- Guides thoughtful purchases of school resources.

Beyond these, the study found unexpected benefits:

- Core Knowledge created coordination in the curriculum.

- Implementing Core Knowledge improves the professional lives of teachers. "Core Knowledge was viewed very favorably by teachers and seen as an enhancement to their lives. Overwhelmingly, teachers enthusiastically encouraged their teacher friends to implement Core Knowledge. This is a very important finding."

- Implementing Core Knowledge led to increased teacher collaboration. Such "genuine collaborative work among teachers that has a focus on the curriculum and instruction is all too rare in education."

- Core Knowledge enriched students' classroom experience. "Teacher reported that it was not just certain students who were excited by Core, but all students . . . The benefits are great for teaching those children who would normally not be exposed to such subjects at home."

- Students built on what they learned previously in Core Knowledge. "Teachers find that in fact students make connections to Core topics they learned in previous grades. Students make lasting academic connections because of the integration of the curriculum and (its) spiraling structure."

- Core Knowledge increased students' interest in reading. Teachers report "students are learning to read bigger words sooner. There's an interest to read and to learn." At a number of schools, "educators cited the fact that students are

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more interested in reading non-fiction as one of the main benefits of Core Knowledge."

Core Knowledge increased parent satisfaction. "Parents are thrilled, thrilled, thrilled," according to one teacher, and another of whom said, "Our parents are elated with the results of Core." Researchers found "no obvious negative outcomes for students, though teacher planning effort was reported to be 'intensive' and 'tiring'."

The Researchers concluded that Core Knowledge implementation "produced clarity of goals, less repetitiveness in the curriculum, and more content rich instruction for students."

Ethos and Culture

Through the implementation of our educational philosophy and program, we will create a learning environment that fosters positive interactions between students and between the faculty and the students. The culture of the school will be based upon high standards and expectations, both academically and behaviorally. A cornerstone of this effort will be to create a set of behavioral expectations that focuses on personal conduct, respect, and responsibility. The School will place an emphasis on educating students on how to respect authority, respect their peers, and make positive behavioral choices. A visitor to the school should expect to enter an organized environment where students are well behaved, where the staff is open and engaging, and where everyone is working hard to make the School's community a close knit family.

The Board believes the underlying attitudes and beliefs of our school's community help shape its character and will make it a unique learning environment. The School will instill a belief in the value of integrity, diligence, perseverance, fairness, kindness, self-respect and friendship in each member of the School's community, including our faculty, administration, students, and families.

In addition to a culture of high standards and expectations, the School will have a vibrant feel to it. The School will work to instill an artistic and expressive ambiance in the School and in each classroom. Many of the projects used in the School will be based on a rich cultural, artistic, and expressive framework drawn from examples around the world and across the centuries. The hallways will be adorned with works of art, and students will work together to create inspired works and to give motivated performances in the classroom, and outside of the School's community.

B. Academic Standards

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is designed so that each component of the academic program supports the attainment of clear and measurable standards of performance for each student. The Board has aligned the School's standards with the Indiana standards to ensure that each of the standards the Board has selected either meet or exceed the Indiana requirements.

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Exit Standards for Math, English Language Arts, and Fine and Performing Art.

One of the reasons the Board elected to work with Beacon Education Management, Inc. is that Beacon has developed a proven curriculum and educational program that contains specific, measurable performance standards that, while ambitious, are attainable by students. As discussed below, the School will only promote students who have achieved specific academic benchmarks. Based on the Beacon School Design, students who continue through the education program to graduation should meet or exceed the School's exit standards. In addition to the graduation requirements set forth under Indiana Law, we will impose certain supplemental requirements. The School's exit standards for 12th grade students in the areas of Math, Art, and English Language Arts, along with the graduation standards for our students in all areas, are attached at **TAB 4A**. The additional standards the School will implement will supplement the Indiana standards, for example: one of our additional English Language Arts standards requires students to keep a record of all reading in a reading journal, with an expectation that students will read at least 25 books a year, including assigned and independent reading. The School will utilize these additional standards to the extent they either meet or exceed the standards currently required by Indiana law. Where the Indiana standards are more rigorous, the School will use the Indiana standards. The School will work with the Education Team at Beacon to ensure that the School's standards are periodically updated to ensure that they reflect any improvement to the Indiana standards.

Approach to Student Promotion.

The School's proposed educational program inverts the traditional formula of American education that promotes students from grade to grade regardless of academic growth. The Board believes that demonstrated learning, rather than measured time, is the true benchmark. Some students will need more time to achieve academic benchmarks, but all students can and will be expected to learn and to meet high academic standards. The School will develop an Individual Learning Plan for each student. Each plan will include the standards, objectives, content and activities that make up each student's program in a given time period. The school year will be at least 190 days, with additional time provided during school inter-sessions for those students who need additional time and support to reach their individual objectives or who want to use the school's resources to accelerate their personal academic growth and enrichment. In the event that a student is not able to make sufficient progress towards achieving academic benchmarks, the School will explore several options to address the needs of the student, such as mixed age classrooms designed to provide intensive instruction to students in need of remediation. For a discussion of the School's assessment standards and strategies, please see the discussion of assessment in Section III.D.

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence's Board of Directors expects that all students in the school will achieve these minimum academic goals:

Meet all learning standards.

All students will achieve at least one year of academic growth each year as measured by a nationally recognized standardized test. Students who are below grade level when they enter the school will be expected to gain more than one

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grade level each year. Data will be gathered as needed to establish baseline performance in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Achieve mastery level on a standardized test administered at the school.

Achieve a proficiency level of performance or above on a state assessment test.

In addition, the Board will develop an accountability plan. The plan will focus on, but not be limited to, the following:

Parental satisfaction as measured by re-enrollment and participation in their child's education.

Attain a 3.0 composite rating or better (on a scale of 1.0 to 4.0) from a minimum of 75% of all parents on a parent satisfaction survey.

The re-enrollment rate at the school will be approximately 90% of all students who have not relocated outside of Indianapolis.

Every student's parent or guardian will attend at least one conference each year. Data will be recorded by teachers and will be included in our Annual Education Report.

Each year the Board will include the results of the parent survey and the summary of student achievement in the annual report.

Graduation Standards

A discussion of the standards that form the basis of the School's education program can be found in Section III.C below. Graduation standards are listed at **TAB 4A**. These standards reflect the types of skills that our students must have in order to graduate. The Board is working, and will constantly work, to ensure that our standards meet or exceed the standards adopted by the State of Indiana.

C. Curriculum

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will use a curriculum developed for the school by Beacon. The Beacon Lightpoints Curriculum™ is based on the following principles:

Rigorous academic core studies with measured benchmarks of progress

A structure that allows each student to master competencies prescribed in the standards

The integration of academic areas through project-based learning activities

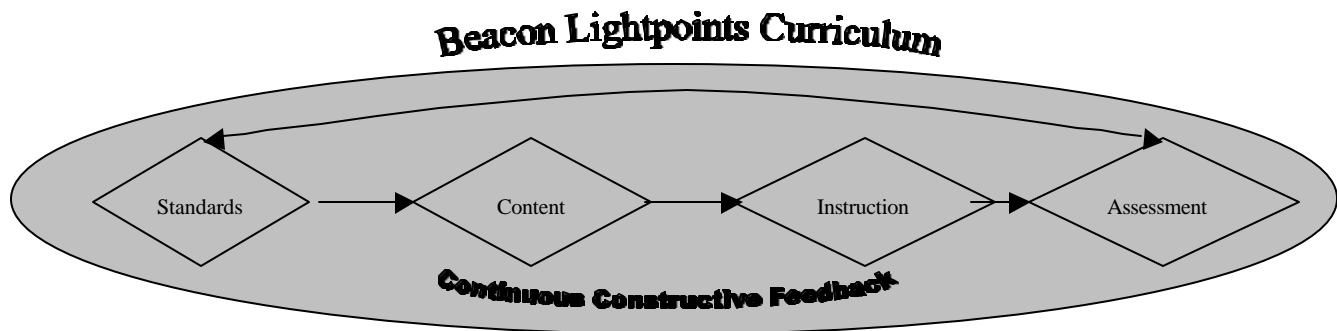
Teaching students career competencies and lifelong learning skills that are age-appropriate and connected to working and learning with adults

Providing extra time, assistance and support to accommodate multiple learning styles and other needs of students

The engagement of students as active learners

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The Beacon Lightpoints™ Curriculum consists of the following elements:

- Standards
- Content
- Instructional Strategies
- Assessment
- Continuous constructive feedback

The Beacon School Tool™ is used to provide continuous feedback to students, staff, parents and administration. A web-based instructional management system that integrates:

- Student information
- Beacon and State education standards
- Lesson plans and lesson plan development
- Student assessment data including student work samples (internal and external)
- Reporting functions

The instructional management system allows staff to collaborate on the development of standards based lesson plans, track student progress towards meeting standards, make adjustments as needed on an individual basis and report the results in a variety of formats.

Lesson Plans

Two sample lesson plans are attached at **TAB 4B**. These lesson plans intentionally incorporate many different learning styles and built-in accommodations. These sample lesson plans are aligned with the School's standards, Indiana State standards, and our educational model. For example, the within our educational program, fifth graders English Language Arts standards continue to explore fine literature, drama, and poetry, while honing and expanding skills in literary analysis and writing. The School's fifth graders will be ready to explore the role of imagery, metaphor, simile and symbol in fine literature. They will be given opportunities to produce their own imaginative or creative writing. In expository writing students should learn

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how to gather information from a variety of sources, organize a basic outline, produce and revise a report or essay. The study of vocabulary and grammar also continues in a systematic fashion.

The "Survival Guide" lesson plan and project addresses several aspects of the English Language Arts and the Fine Arts portions of our curriculum by engaging students in a reading, writing, and drawing exercise that is coupled with the use of technology to produce a final work product. The lesson aligns with our fifth grade Reading standards, which include the following requirements: reading material and being able to present information gained by such reading in oral and written formats and reading aloud accurately. It also aligns with our fifth grade Writing standards, which include students developing and demonstrating an ability to create a well organized report or short expository piece, develop a basic outline for student's own work, organize material in paragraphs that follow logically and are internally coherent, and produce a variety of writing that engages the reader, develops a controlling idea with appropriate facts and details, follows logical organizing structure and reaches closure. The "Survival Guide" project also incorporates portions of our Speaking & Listening standards, such as participating in group meetings, making voluntary contributions, actively engaging other participants, cueing off of comments of others, and responding civilly to the comments and questions of others, participating in one-on-one conference with adult, responding with appropriate elaboration to adult-initiated topics, initiating new topics, asking relevant questions, and demonstrating an understanding of the subject under consideration. The lesson's focus on a written work product allows the teacher to work with the Conventions, Grammar and Language Usage standards, like demonstrating subject and predicate in sentence and understand subject-verb agreement, knowing that pronouns must agree with antecedents in number, case (nominative, objective, possessive) and gender, correct use of punctuation studied in earlier grades, indicating title of book by underlining or italics, and analyzing and reviewing work to clarify it and make it more effective in communicating intended message or thought. The project also brings in portions of the Fine Arts standards, such as the use of different art materials safely and responsibly to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories.

Standards

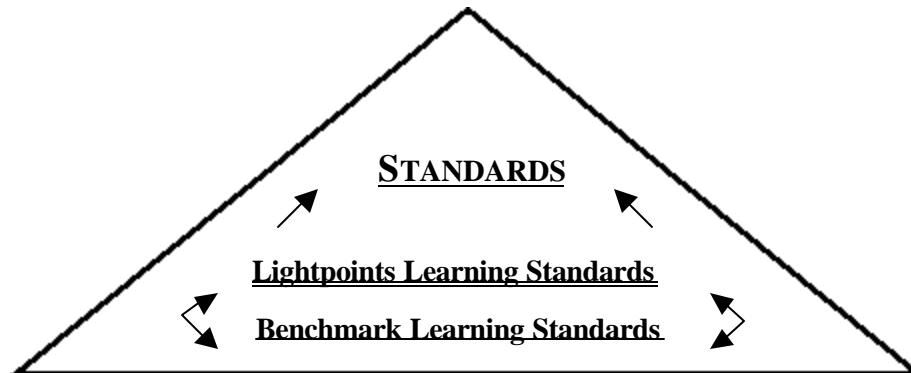
Standards define the minimum level of performance that students are expected to achieve by a point in time. Standards make clear to everyone what students are expected to know and be able to do. Beacon uses New Standards developed by the National Center for Education and the Economy and Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh for Science, Mathematics and English Language Arts/Language Arts. Standards from the National History Standards and the Geography Education National Implementation Project were used for History and Geography. The Standards for the Career Pathways were drawn from Learning a Living. Standards for Technology, World Language, Health and the Arts were drawn from the national database to complete the framework for the Beacon Lightpoints™ Curriculum.

As an example of the School's standards and benchmarks, the Board has included the standards for 12th grade in **TAB 4A**. A flow-chart highlighting the integration of our lessons and standards are on the following page.

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The Lightpoints™ Learning Standards are used to define what students need to know and be able to do in each subject. Benchmarks Learning Standards are then used as checkpoints along the way. These learning standards act much like "merit badges" on the way to mastering a topic or skill. The accumulation of benchmark knowledge and skills enables students to demonstrate performance mastery. In order to meet the Lightpoints™ Learning Standards, students need to apply the knowledge and skills learned in one grade in all future grades. In each core subject, benchmarks are specified for each level as well as the initial grade level(s) where mastery is expected. Content standards are listed for each subject at each grade level for each core subject. The Lightpoints™ Curriculum is cumulative, as are all assessments.



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Sample Articulated Learning Standards at Subject, Benchmark, and Grade Levels

LEARNING STANDARD STATEMENT

Chronological Thinking

Each student will understand the chronological order of historical events and recognize the complexity of historical cause and effect, including the interaction of forces from different spheres of human activity and the importance of individuals and their ideas, actions, and choices.

GRADE 4 BENCHMARKS

Chronological Thinking

- Understand time and be able to measure it in years, decades, and centuries
- Identify the time at which events occurred and the sequence in which they occurred from a time line
- Group historical events into broadly defined eras and periods: colonial America, the Roman Empire, medieval Europe

GRADE 8 BENCHMARKS

GRADE 12 BENCHMARKS

GRADE 1 COURSE STANDARDS

Chronological Thinking

- Develop “picture” time lines by clipping photographs or drawings of events to a clothesline or pasting them into an album.

GRADE 2 COURSE STANDARDS

Chronological Thinking

- Listen to historical stories and myths and reconstruct the basic chronological organization of the narrative by placing events in their correct sequence
- Measure calendar time by days, weeks, and months

GRADE 3 COURSE STANDARDS

Chronological Thinking

- Create personal narratives of their family’s or their community’s history, establishing a chronology with a clear beginning, middle, and end
- Identify examples of continuity and change in their own lives, in the community, and in the ways other people live today and lived long ago

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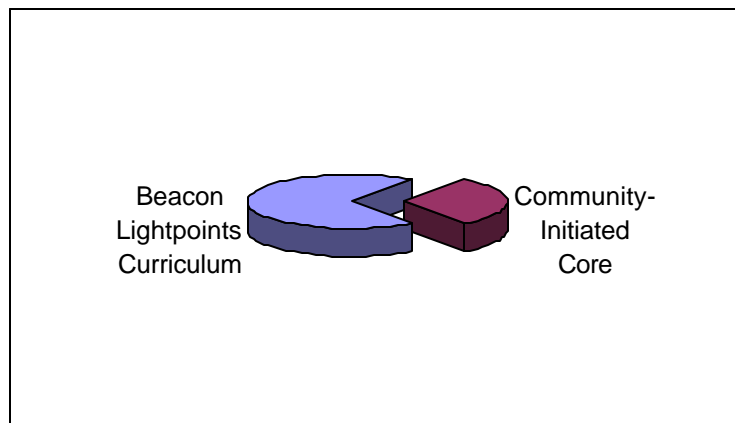
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Content

The content used to teach children is based upon the **Core Knowledge Sequence** developed by the Core Knowledge Foundation in Charlottesville, Virginia. The Core Knowledge Sequence is a detailed outline of specific content to be taught in language arts, history, geography, mathematics, science, and the arts. This content is matched to the curriculum standards at each grade level.

All students, including those who may be "at risk," will be well served at the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence. The American Federation of Teachers report on Six Promising Schoolwide Programs for Raising Student Achievement, July 1998, noted that Core Knowledge helps at risk children through the provision of a common core of learning rather than placing these children in diluted, unstructured programs that are now commonplace.

The core Beacon Lightpoints™ Curriculum represents seventy percent of what is taught in each school day. The community and the teachers in the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will add content that reflects our schools focus on fine and performing arts, as well as our emphasis on character education and reading. Local interests and needs may be determined by a survey of parents during the enrollment process. Beacon Curriculum Consultants and our school's local staff will then develop appropriate units of study. Core studies may also be expanded to reflect the needs of children enrolled in the school.



Teachers will use a variety of materials in the instructional process.

Subject Area Specifics

The following are the highlights of our curriculum. A more detailed summary of the curriculum can be found at **TAB 4C**.

Language Arts

The Open Court reading program, **Collections for Young Scholars™**, will be used for reading and writing in grades one through six. The program utilizes whole class activities and small group and individual instruction. The program can be used with special needs, bilingual and English language learners (ELL) students as well as students who read below grade level.

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This is a direct instruction program that focuses on alphabetical and phonological awareness, phonics, and reading books that contain a high proportion of phonics elements taught throughout the program. **The Accelerated Reader** program will supplement the Open Court program. The Accelerated Reader Program is a computer-based reading program designed to supplement the basic reading program. The **Junior Great Books** program will also be implemented in grades two and above. The Junior Great Books program will serve as a means for all students to apply basic skills as well as inquiry strategies. Reading JGB at home is one method the school will use to develop a literate home environment. Rebecca Sitton's **Spelling Sourcebook Series™** will be used for a K-6 spelling program. The Spelling Sourcebook Series is an alternative approach to spelling which integrates spelling skills into writing and language arts.

Mathematics

SRA Math: Explorations and Applications provides unique concept development, extensive practice in basic skills, applications through problem solving, and assessment ranging from daily mental math activities to formal standardized test taking. The program utilizes a sequence which builds upon topics in a logical manner. Key concepts are thoroughly integrated to show students the natural connections. Early introduction of concepts, including algebra, geometry, multiplication, division, and problem solving, helps students develop a deeper understanding of mathematics. The **Everyday Mathematics™** program integrates mathematics instruction into other curriculum areas. Special emphasis is placed on applications in science and social studies, on the origins and uses of the language of mathematics, and on the close relationship between mathematics and the visual arts. Mathematics becomes a part of the ongoing daily routines of the classroom, of outdoor play, and of those transitional moments that occur during every school day.

Connected Mathematics is recommended for grades 7-8. This modular program continues the interdisciplinary focus of **Everyday Mathematics** in the elementary grades. The instructional sequence taps into adolescent's natural curiosity by engaging them in activities that require authentic use of mathematics to solve problems. Homework reinforces concepts addressed in class, and written reflections build in opportunities for students to use their imaginations to consider mathematics as a part of everyday life.

Contemporary Mathematics in Context, developed by the Core-Plus Mathematics Project, is the recommended high school mathematics program. Published by the Everyday Learning Corporation, the program is designed for all students, from tech prep to college prep, and addresses each area of mathematics every year for three years. The fourth year of the program is designed for more advanced preparation for interested students. If a traditional sequence is necessary, Prentice Hall's **Algebra, Geometry and Advanced Algebra: Tools for a Changing World** and **Advanced Mathematics: A Precalculus Approach** can be used in Grades 9-12. These four courses provide students with a comprehensive high school mathematics program that prepares them for college mathematics and beyond. Students participate in projects which encourage them to talk about mathematics, reason about mathematics, and work together to solve real-world problems.

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Science

The Beacon curriculum in Science is divided into three grade spans (K-5, 6-8, 9-12), in alignment with recent science standard documents, **Benchmarks in Science Literacy** and the **National Science Education Standards**. Beacon's Science program integrates standards based curricula, such as TRACS, GEMS, and AIMS. The focus throughout is on developing students' appreciation of and abilities in scientific inquiry while they acquire scientific knowledge and identify its relevance to their everyday lives. By fostering students' natural curiosity and expanding their skills in asking and answering questions about the natural world, teachers provide the foundation for scientific literacy essential for modern citizens.

History and Geography

Teachers will use a variety of materials and resources including Telling America's Story, How We Learned that the Earth Was Round, and Let's Explore Space. Information from the National Geographic Kid's Network Smithsonian and other web sites will also be used.

Study Skills and Test Preparation

Scholastic Research Associates' **Scoring High** series will be used to help student's prepare to take standardized tests. In addition students in grades one and above will participate in Houghton **Mifflin's Learning and Study Skills Program**. The series will be used to teach students skills such as listening, observing, main ideas, creative problem solving, visualizing, note taking, and organizing ideas. The core subject areas will then supply the area of skill application.

World Language

Students will use **Amigos - Spanish as a Second Language** from Rei America Inc. The program supports the interdisciplinary nature of the Beacon curriculum.

The Arts

The Arts will include music, visual arts, drama and dance. On-site specialists and artists in residence will teach these programs. The arts are integrated into the curriculum and specifically into language arts, history and physical education. Students will learn dances, art and music from cultures that are studied in History. Students will learn to play simple instruments like the recorder. Students will have the opportunity to express themselves through song and dance. Materials to be used **include Learning to Look and Create, The Spectra Program**, and **The Music Connection** from Silver Burdett.

Character Education

Beacon's diverse curriculum incorporates character education and diversity in order to better prepare students to be responsible citizens in the 21st century. Schools managed by Beacon stress character education by implementing core values such as integrity, diligence, perseverance, fairness, kindness, self-respect and friendship into the curriculum. These values are taught through core subjects, homeroom discussions, school meetings, parent education

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sessions and school wide assemblies. The character education program will be based upon the work of Mary Beth Klee (Core Virtues Curriculum).

Diversity is an intrinsic value within any effective educational program. The racial and cultural background of all students and other members of the Beacon school community will be valued as essential assets in the ongoing development of life-long learners. All members of the Beacon school community will be exposed to a racially and culturally diverse school and work environment and be expected to further their understanding of the others with whom they learn, work and live. Diversity will be reflected in the student population, curriculum development, staff development, board development, school programs, co-curricular activities and parent activities. Indianapolis Academy of Excellence celebrates the diversity of their students, parents and community through the education program and community partnerships.

Health and Physical Education

Indianapolis Academy of Excellence stresses the integration of health concepts in the core curriculum. Material developed by Annabel Jensen from the **Six Second Organization** will be used to instruct students on conflict resolution. The School Safety Program developed by the United States Department of Education will also be used as part of the school wide program. Additional material will be drawn from the National Dairy Council, American Cancer Society and Scholastic's Weekly Reader Series. Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will implement the **SPARK** program for physical education in grades k-6. **SPARK** is a curriculum and staff development program designed to help elementary teachers provide quality physical education. The primary goal of the comprehensive program is to help teachers improve the physical activity, fitness, and movement skills of elementary students.

Parent Education

Parent education programs will be provided on a regular schedule. Modeling the student program, parents will be invited to participate in a series of workshops based upon the United States Department of Education's **Helping Your Child to Learn** series. Modules include reading, mathematics, homework, using the library, and test taking.

Parents will engage in hands on activities designed to help them understand the curriculum, the content, and the process that forms the framework of their child's education. The school will collaborate with other agencies in providing basic literacy programs when needed.

D. Assessment

Assessment is an essential component of the school's educational plan. The school's educational format establishes standards at each grade level that provide a framework for assessment. The Lightpoints™ Learning Standards that we will implement are used to define what students need to know and be able to do in each subject. Benchmarks Learning Standards are then used as checkpoints along the way. These learning standards act much like "merit badges" on the way to mastering a topic or skill. The accumulation of benchmark knowledge and skills enables students to demonstrate performance mastery. Our assessment approach is derived from our standards and is built upon a multiple-measures approach.

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Assessments will be constructed and integrated in accordance with the curriculum and will indicate overall achievement levels. The staff will utilize a curriculum and instructional management system such as the IIMS (Instructional Information Management System) for this purpose. This software program allows teachers to align national and state standards, to develop lessons and Individual Learning Plans, and to track student progress. The most recent version of the IIMS is web-based and will allow parents to view samples of their child's schoolwork online.

The teacher will evaluate and provide feedback on student progress using a variety of assessment methods that value both the content and the process of academic achievement as described above. The emphasis in assessment is to ensure that students have ample opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. Teachers will provide written report cards four times a year and schedule parent conferences semi-annually. A portfolio night will be held twice a year. Portfolio night will be a time when students display their work samples for their parents and others. At the end of the year, parent conferences will be used to develop next year's Individual Learning Plan.

As required by statute, the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will participate in the statewide system of assessment, will collect baseline data on its student population every year and will provide data required for the study of charter schools. The school wide assessment program, furthermore, will be multi-dimensional, aligned with State of Indiana standards, and will consist of the following components:

- Anecdotal records and interviews
- Checklists to reflect mastery of skills
- Student portfolios
- State assessments
- Standardized tests

The School will use a Standards approach to assessment. Standards list a clear set of guidelines for particular pieces of work. They allow for recognition of high achievement by describing what work will look like at varying levels of success. Standards break down large assignments into smaller parts so a student could see if he or she, for example, demonstrated high-level research skills, but significantly less successful writing and organizational skills. In addition, Standards will be developed for use with student portfolios. Students will receive standards with each project assignment so they may constantly edit their work to strive for higher achievement. After projects are assessed, students will use the standards to revise work that falls below minimum standards. Student projects will not be "complete" upon submission; a project will be finished when the student's work is complete and meets or exceeds the standards for the project.

Because of the artistic focus of the School, the Board will endeavor to implement a robust portfolio, performance, and jury assessment process to help students realize their strength and grow to overcome areas that need improvement. All such assessments will be done using Standards and rubrics that are developed for the School.

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In classes where discrete skills or content knowledge is necessary for certain units, students will learn to study for, and to take tests and quizzes, in diverse formats. Test taking strategies and decoding skills form benchmarks that allow students to get beyond the examination and actually demonstrate the knowledge being tested. Rather than serving as an end to learning, these benchmarks free students to illustrate subject mastery.

The School will conduct ongoing reviews of student performance to ensure that each child is making measurable progress towards meeting the expectations outlined in the students' Individual Learning Plan and both the Lightpoints™ Learning Standards and the Benchmarks Learning Standards. While the Board does not anticipate the need to make any significant adjustments to our education model, due in large part to Beacon's expertise and the research supporting our education program model, the Board will evaluate the data from the classrooms to make sure that the Board is meeting the high goals and expectations that the Board is setting for ourselves.

At the end of the academic year, the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will prepare and publish an annual report describing and delineating its financial and academic programs and results. The report shall also contain a description of the school's teaching methods, as well as instructional or administrative innovations. Copies of this annual report shall be distributed to the sponsor, the Indianapolis Public School Board of Education and the Indiana State Board of Education. Copies will also be available at the school for public review.

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Assessment Strategies

	K	1	2	3	4	5-12
<u>Informal</u>						
Student Observation						
Interview						
Discussion						
Journal						
Notebook						
Self-Evaluation						
<u>Formal</u>						
Visuals						
Graphs						
Charts						
Maps						
Diagrams						
Models						
Timelines						
<u>Internal Assessments</u>						
New Standards English						
Reference Exams Math						
Science						
<u>Constructed Response</u>						
Phrases; Sentences						
Paragraphs						
Expository Essay						
Extended Essay						
Research Monograph						
<u>Exhibitions</u>						
Oral Report						
Multimedia						
Poster						
Collage						
Bulletin Board						
Drama/Music/Art						
<u>External</u>						
State Assessments						
Stanford Diagnostic						
Reading Test						
Stanford 9 ⁵						

⁵ Or other assessment (such as Terra Nova) required by the Authorizer

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E. Support for Learning

An unfortunate trend in public education is for individuals of all ages to accept a culture of low expectations, which inhibits, rather than promotes, the drive for excellence. The School will reverse this trend in public education by (i) placing high expectations on our students, our administration, our staff, and our families and (ii) giving each member of our school's community the tools and assistance they need to succeed.

One of the key ingredients for academic achievement is a supportive learning environment. The Board has a three-pronged approach to providing such an environment. First, the School will create a safe learning environment in which students will feel free to actively participate in their education and the education of their fellow classmates. Second, the School will provide students with a framework of their rights and responsibilities. Third, we will adopt an active parent and community engagement program to help us ensure that the Board is doing what we can to respond to the needs of our students and their families.

A Safe and Positive Environment for Learning

The Board believes that all students have the right to make choices and that it is the school's role to help encourage our students to make positive choices. Part of the educational process necessarily requires that students be given the opportunity to make decisions for themselves. When the choice a student makes is a poor one, the School will take a nurturing approach to guiding the student to make a positive choice the next time he or she encounters a similar situation. This process is part of the character development role that our school will play in the lives of our students.

The cornerstone of the School's approach to developing a safe and nurturing learning environment is that all of our students have rights and that with these rights come responsibilities. Students rights and responsibilities will be set forth in the policies and regulations that are adopted by the Board, which will include student adherence to a code of conduct. Appropriate behavior and conduct is expected from students at all times. The student will be held accountable for his/her behavior during school hours; including while the student is going to and from school and at or near school bus stops and on the bus. Maintaining behavioral standards within the school is essential to ensuring an environment conducive to learning.

Framework of Student Rights and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the student not to engage in behavior that disrupts the ongoing program of the school, shows disrespect for the rights of others or presents a clear and present danger to the health, safety or welfare of those in school or to the general public. If the student fails to fulfill his/her responsibilities in regards to conduct, disciplinary action will follow. In disciplinary cases, students are entitled to due process. Students may be recommended for long-term suspension or expulsion for offenses, based on the seriousness and degree of the behavior and with consideration for the safety and protection of the students, staff, and school property.

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Fighting/physical assault, sexual harassment, defiance, profanity to a teacher or student, smoking on school grounds and to and from school including bus stops, continued disruption of school environment/classroom, theft, possession of cigarettes and lighters, possession/use/selling of drugs or drug paraphernalia, and possession of a firearm, weapon, or explosives will not be tolerated. The school will be a drug and weapon free zone.

Family-School Partnerships

The engagement of parents and guardians in the educational process is critical to the long-term success of our school and our students. The Board believes that a school must be connected to the families and the community it seeks to serve. For a description of how the School plans to achieve this objective, please see the discussion in Section I.A of this Charter Proposal.

Although the Board has not yet selected the specific location for our school, we intend to make our facility a focal point for our neighborhood and community. In addition to providing a world-class education to our students, our Board of Directors will consider making the school facility open evenings, weekends and during break periods for community use. In addition, the School's facility will be made available to student and parent/guardian groups that want to use the facility for educational purposes, for discussion groups, and for other programs that may be offered in cooperation with third party organizations and institutions.

The School will use several different kinds of tools to assess and tailor our parent and community engagement program. As with the assessment of our students, the Board believes there are many ways in which the success of our parent engagement program can be evaluated. The School may conduct parent satisfaction surveys to gain specific feedback, hold open forum segments at our board meetings to invite family and community input in decision making, invite community and family members to serve on committees of the Board, conduct exit surveys of graduates, and conduct exit interviews or surveys of students who choose not to re-enroll in our program. As the School collects and compiles data on the parent and community engagement program and the academic programs, the School will prepare thoughtful summaries of the data and include those in our annual report.

F. Special Student Population

Students who need services under the IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 will receive those services in accordance with the IEP (IDEA) or program plan (504). Students with special needs will be included in the regular classroom and participate fully in the school's academic and assessment program in accordance with their IEP or 504 Plan. The school staff will include a resource room teacher and aides. When necessary, the school will contract with other specialists to provide services needed. In the event that the school is not able to meet the needs of a student, it would seek to contract with another provider in a manner consistent with Federal and State statute to provide these services. In addition, any provisions contained herein are subject to state and federal requirements for students with disabilities.

All core curriculum classes are taught in English Language Arts with in-class support for ELL. During the World Language Program, ELL students often study their first languages in

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order to build important language skills that transfer to their use of English. Native English speakers will learn a second language. This approach recognizes:

- The importance of preparing ELL students for content instruction in English

- The importance of developing literacy and fluency in one's first language so that it may be transferred to one's second language

- The importance of all students learning a second language

- The importance of integrating students of all cultures in a common academic program

At the school, both the first and second language needs of all children will be met with a clear recognition that the ability to perform academically in English is necessary for every child's long-term success. The school will meet these complex sets of needs not by dividing children into fluency or language groups, but by placing all children together in mixed groups and then providing the necessary resources in the classroom to allow all children to excel. Whenever possible, by teaching their first language to ELL students during part of the day, the school will allow them to continue building basic literacy skills that ultimately transfer to their use of English. By including native English speakers in these classes, the School will not only provide them with second language instruction but also create a sense of balance in the school community that recognizes the importance of all the languages and cultures.

IV. ORGANIZATION VIABILITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

A. Budget

The Board recognizes that the long-term viability of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is tied to the strength of its financial plan. The Board has attached a five-year budget forecast at **TAB 7**. Included as part of the budget are the operating assumptions upon which the budget is based. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will obtain a "start-up loan" from Beacon Education Management, Inc. to cover all operating, property maintenance, leasing, and purchasing costs during the development and start-up period. The general terms of this loan are included in Beacon's Management Agreement with the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence. In general, start-up loan proceeds provided by Beacon Education Management are amortized over the first years of the School's operation. Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will operate using the fiscal policies and procedures provided by Beacon Education Management, Inc. The budget has been prepared by Beacon's team of start-up specialists and is based on operating experiences in Beacon's 29 charter schools across the country.

As part of our budgeting process, the Board has built in reserves to ensure that our school has the flexibility necessary to adjust to events that are not reflected in the budget assumptions. The Board will constantly monitor the realities of our school's development and operations, and the Board will make the necessary adjustment to our budgetary assumptions based on those realities. Furthermore, the Board will create a working budget for our school in the spring of 2002 once many of the assumptions underlying the budget, such as our facilities costs, are solidified.

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B. Enrollment and Demand

As soon as possible after the approval of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence's charter by the sponsor, the school will initiate a systematic, methodical, documented recruitment process to help ensure the school is not racially or socio-economically isolated. Although the Board is planning to serve primarily students that reside in Marion County, the school will accept applications from across the state, as required by the Indiana Charter School Law. The Board will concentrate the School's marketing efforts on the Indianapolis metropolitan area, with an emphasis on the geographic area around the school. The Board is working with the development team at Beacon Education Management to create a customized marketing plan for our school to ensure that the Board is able to attract students and to reach those families that are traditionally less informed about educational options. The Board will ensure that our admissions policies and procedures comply with the Indiana Charter School Law and with any applicable court ordered desegregation plan.

The Board will begin marketing the school and accepting applications in January 2002. The Board anticipates conducting the first admissions lottery in early February. The school will enroll all students who submit timely, completed applications prior to the deadline for the enrollment lottery. If the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the school at any enrollment date, a lottery will be used to determine admission. Any applicants that were not selected by the initial lottery will be placed in an applicant pool that will include all applicants that have not yet received a spot in the school. The Board will conduct periodic lotteries of all students that have submitted a completed application and that have not yet been admitted to the school. The Board believes this multiple lottery system is better suited to effectuate the public policy goal of ensuring that every child has a equal opportunity to gain admission to our school than a first-come, first-served admissions policy.

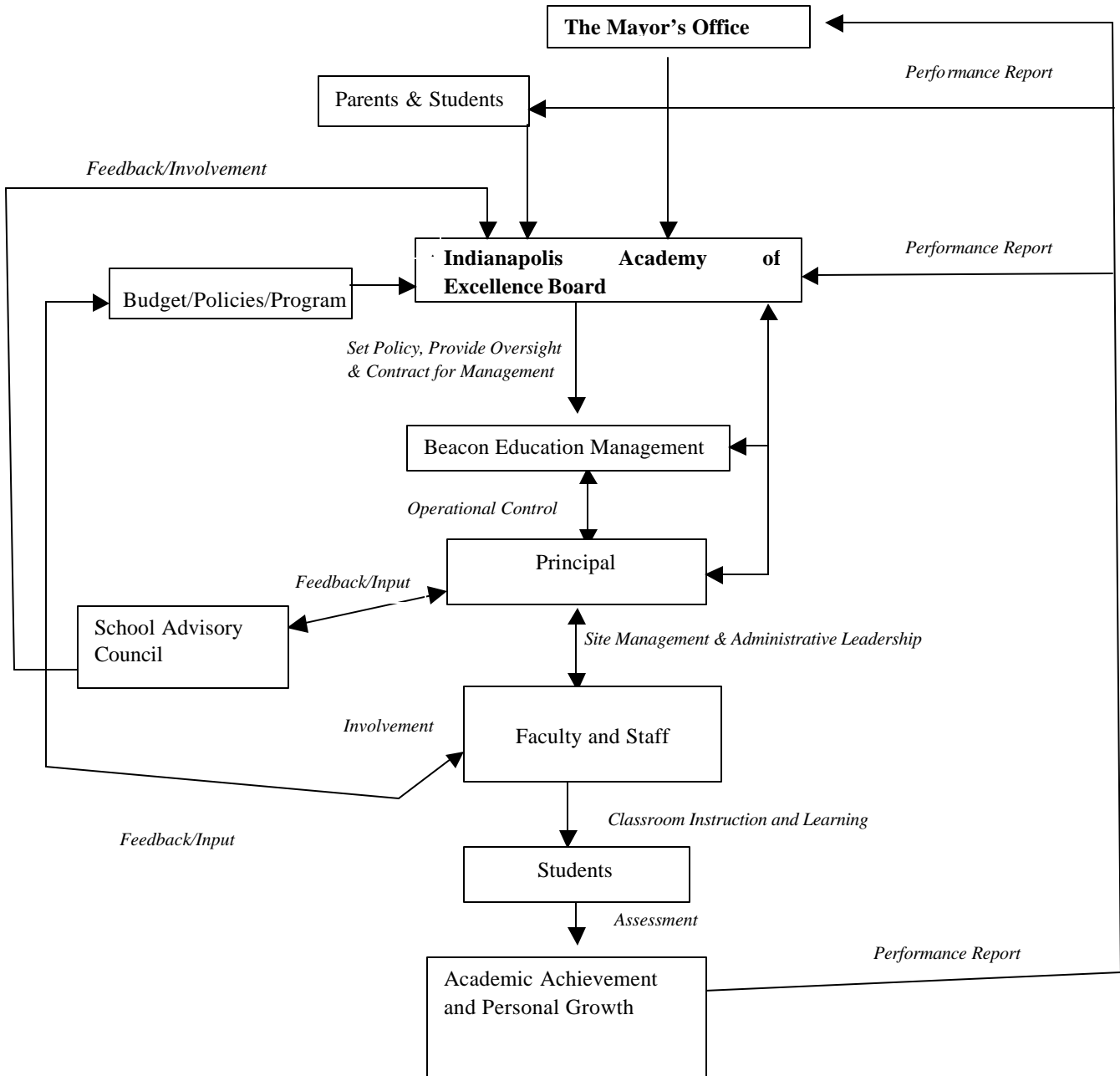
Lotteries will be conducted in accordance to a lottery policy adopted by the Board. Admission will be limited to the grades and ages of pupils served by the school. The Board may elect to give enrollment preference to siblings of students already attending or accepted to the school. The school will not restrict admissions based upon race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, gender, income level, proficiency in English Language Arts, or athletic ability.

Beacon Education Management has already conducted some informal research on the Indianapolis area, which shows a high level of demand for public school choice. Once the Board has received our Charter and identified a specific facility for our school, we plan to perform a telephone survey of parents and community members. The Board will use the results of the survey to further tailor the enrollment and marketing approach for the School to ensure that the Board is able to attract a sufficient number of students to the School. According to their internal records, the average student enrollment at the 29 charter schools that were being operated by Beacon Education Management in September 2001 is approximately 95 percent of the school's capacity, and Beacon schools generally have a significant waiting list of eligible applicants. The Board is working with Beacon's development team to ensure that we locate our school in a facility that will both be suitable for our school's mission and vision and that will help the School ensure that we maintain a high level of enrollment.

For information about the School's projected expansion during the initial term of the charter, please see the Information Sheet attached at **TAB 1**.

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C. Governance and Management



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Description of the Governance and Operation of the School

As required by statute, the school will be nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices and all other aspects of its operations. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence is exempt from all laws and rules relating to schools, governing school boards, and school districts with the exception of the laws and conditions specified in the Indiana Charter School Law. The school will comply with all state and federal laws pertaining to health, safety, civil rights and minimal educational standards.

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence, Inc., an Indiana not-for-profit corporation, is the legal entity applying to the sponsor for the charter. We take responsibility for all decisions concerning the school. The members of the board of directors are willing to submit affidavits to assure the sponsor of the background and suitability of the board members to serve on the governing board of an Indiana charter school. We may expand the Board in accordance with the provisions of our articles of incorporation and bylaws.

The Board has contracted out the management of the academic program and business operations of the school to Beacon Education Management, Inc., an education management organization experienced in the operation of charter schools. A copy of the Management Agreement is attached at **TAB 5**. The Board selected Beacon Education Management as the School's service provider for a number of reasons. These include:

- Beacon's proven track record of success.

- An education program that utilizes the Core Knowledge Sequence.

- The programmatic flexibility to tailor the education program to the needs of our community.

- The ability to align the educational program with our mission and vision.

- An efficient management team that understands how to maximize educational results within the context of a public school budget.

For more information about Beacon Education Management, Inc. please see **TAB 4D**.

The contract with Beacon is based on a flat fee for service and is performance-based. The Board of Directors may terminate the contract if Beacon fails to meet academic and parent satisfaction goals established in the school's accountability plan.

The general responsibilities of the Board of Directors are to:

- Define the school's mission

- Set strategic policy

- Approve the annual budget

- Monitor school performance and operations

- Oversee the school's management contract with Beacon Education Management

- Report student achievement results to the sponsor, city, parents and the community

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Develop an accountability plan

Final responsibility on all matters concerning the school will rest with the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence of Indiana.

A resume of each Board member is included in the leadership information at **TAB 9**. General background information on the members of our Board of Directors can be found in Section I.A of this Charter Proposal. All Board meetings, and the minutes of such meetings, shall be subject to the Freedom of Information Act and the Indiana Open Meetings Act, as well as other applicable statutes.

The Board has structured itself to become a board of nine voting members, comprised of three classes that hold staggered three-year terms. The Board has also limited service on the board to no more than two consecutive terms to allow new members to join the board, while permitting former board members to rejoin the board following a one-year hiatus. In addition, the Board plans to have our Principal serve as an ex officio member of the board of directors. This will help provide a direct link between the Board of Directors and the individual who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school. The Board also plans to invite the President of our Parent Advisory Team to serve as an ex officio member of the Board of Directors.

Each Board member will have one vote, and adoption of any issue shall be by simple majority. The Board of Directors shall meet approximately ten times per year, with special or additional meetings being called by the Board Chair or by any three Board members.

Board of Directors' meetings will be open to parents and the public. At least one meeting per year shall be held especially for all parents and the public to attend and receive an annual report about the charter school's performance. Closed meetings may be held to discuss matters covered by the applicable statute(s).

Parents will be fully engaged in our schools as partners by serving on the School Advisory Councils, on standing committees, and as volunteers in our schools and classrooms. The school will pursue assistance from private businesses both financially and in terms of practical experiences for the students.

The School Advisory Council will consist of parents elected by the parents of children attending the school and will include teachers elected by the staff. Community members may also be members of the Council by the invitation of the Council. Parents will constitute the majority of members. The Council will play a vital role in advising the principal on school policies and programs.

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are included at **TAB 4E** and **TAB 4F**, respectively. The Board acknowledges that the definition of "Organizer" in the Indiana Charter School Law requires that the School file for tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service. The Board is in the process of preparing the Form 1023 and filing it with the Internal Revenue Service. The Board anticipates filing those documents in October 2001. The Board will supplement this Charter Proposal with a copy of the Form 1023 submission letter or the determination letter once it is received from the Internal Revenue Service, which can be inserted in this Proposal at **TAB 4G**.

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Sponsor's Involvement

The sponsor shall have no direct role in the day-to-day operation and supervision of the school, but shall be available for advice and assistance. The sponsor is encouraged to provide such services as assessment advice and curricular consultation. In return, the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence offers itself as a working urban laboratory for research and instructional methods and as a tool in the neighborhood revitalization efforts that are underway in Indianapolis.

The sponsor, the board, and the school's staff will jointly review the school's performance, management and operations as required by statute. The sponsor and the school shall jointly determine the method and scope of the review.

Charter Specifics and Term of Charter

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence Board of Directors seeks a charter term of at least seven years, with the understanding that the charter may be renewed at the end of that period with the approval of the sponsor. In the final year of the initial term, the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will approach the original sponsor or another eligible sponsor to authorize renewal. We propose that the Charter automatically renew for a additional 7 year terms, so long as the School has been in compliance with the terms of the Charter and the Indiana Charter School Law during the immediately preceding term of the Charter.

With a charter term of seven years, and the automatic renewal provision described above, the School's access to capital financing will improve markedly.

The charter may be amended by mutual agreement of the board of directors of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence and the sponsor. All amendments shall be submitted in writing sixty days in advance and shall be posted at the school for public viewing and comment during that same time period. At the end of the sixty days, signatures from the chairman of the board of Indianapolis Academy of Excellence and a representative of the sponsor shall authorize the amendment, which will then be included within the original charter and noted as an amendment by date and title.

D. Human Resources

Principal

The school principal shall be responsible for the daily operations of the school and, in consultation with the staff, for the development of school programs and policies for Board review and approval. The school principal shall be responsible for administering the budget approved by the Board of Directors, recruiting new students, supervising all staff members regarding school policy and curriculum, assessing and evaluating all staff, and for overseeing student progress. The principal will report directly to the Regional Vice President of Operation of Beacon Education Management on an operational basis and to the Board of Directors on a monthly basis.

The principal shall be responsible for interviewing candidates for all other staff positions and for making employment recommendations. The principal shall have the authority to hire

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and terminate all staff. All employees are directly responsible to the principal. The staff is expected to bring issues of concern to the principal's attention through one or more of the following:

- Individual meetings,
- Staff meetings,
- School Advisory Council meetings.

If staff members feel that their concerns have not been addressed satisfactorily, they may petition in writing to the Board Chair to have their concerns heard at a Board meeting.

The principal will begin work several months before the school is scheduled to open. The principal will attend the Beacon Principals' Center program for opening charter schools. The program includes:

- Meeting with Beacon's National Curriculum Team to review the alignment of the curriculum standards with Indiana standards,
- Training in the use of Beacon's School Tools™ including curriculum management software,
- Review of Beacon operational procedures for financial management,
- Review of Beacon's accountability standards for the staff.

Beacon Education Management will be responsible for providing management services to support the day-to-day operations of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence in compliance with applicable state and federal law, including the handling of school staffing decisions. The school's Board of Directors will interview and approve any principal hired. All teachers, administrators and support staff at the school will be hired and employed by Beacon Education Management.

Teachers

Teachers are an integral part of the school and shall be primarily responsible for the students' classroom education. Teachers at the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will have a unique opportunity to help develop a school modeled on national best practices and local vision. Teachers will be given a significant role in the development of school policies and programs. A collegial atmosphere will characterize the school's environment.

Teachers at the school are expected to have a firm belief in the instructional methods and in the curriculum set forth in this proposal. Teachers will understand and be committed to the philosophy of the school. They must have a strong desire to help all students learn. Teachers will set high expectations for all of their students. Teachers must ensure that all students meet the school's curriculum goals and are trained to provide a challenging yet supportive learning environment. The Principal will conduct periodic performance reviews of the teaching staff and other personnel consistent with Beacon's principles of accountability. Continuing employment of the teaching staff and other personnel at the School shall be subject to an annual satisfactory evaluation. Staff who are rated unacceptable shall be subject to a performance improvement plan or termination upon recommendation of the Principal.

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The qualifications of teachers hired will meet state requirements. Per statute, 100% of the school's teachers will hold teaching certificates or be in the process of obtaining such certification.

All teachers are projected to begin work in July 2002 and will work no less than 200 days of the calendar year in each full school year. In the first year, teachers will complete the "Kickoff" program at Beacon Summer Institute prior to the start of the school year. At the Beacon Summer Institute, teachers will:

- Learn how to use Beacon School Tools,[™] which include systems to develop rubrics, engage productivity tools, and utilize curriculum management software,

- Develop lesson plans that reflect the needs of children enrolled in the school. The standards and content will be drawn from the Beacon Lightpoints[™] Curriculum, and Beacon's curriculum consultants will assist in creating the customized core curriculum for Indianapolis Academy of Excellence,

- Train with Beacon instructional systems and materials,

- Learn basic school operation procedures including violence prevention, CPR, first aid, supply requisition process, and evacuation procedures, and

- Set school-wide and individual goals with the principal.

First year teachers will also meet their assigned mentor who will work with them throughout the year on:

- Lesson plan development,

- Classroom management,

- Goal setting, and

- Assessment strategies.

The Board anticipates hiring approximately 15 teachers during the first year of operations. In addition, we anticipate hiring a principal, an office manager, support staff and other personnel. For more information about the staffing assumption, see the Budget attached to this Charter Proposal at **TAB 7**. A discussion of our special needs staffing approach can be found in Section III.F. The Board anticipates offering salaries at or above the regional averages and will consider implementing creative merit based compensation and bonus structures to align the incentives of our educators with the needs of their students and with the educational goals of our school. The staff will be eligible for a comprehensive benefits package that includes health insurance, a retirement plan, as well as a host of other benefits.

The schools' Office Manager will begin work about a month after the principal comes aboard for the school start-up. All other school support staff will begin work at least two weeks before school opens. Staff will participate in training modules that correspond to their area of responsibility.

Description of the School's Plan for Securing Personnel

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will secure personnel by advertising in the local print media and by contacts through the career placement centers at each of Indiana's post-

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secondary teacher training institutions, along with other methods. Candidates will be invited to provide application materials and resumes. Because of the team approach to education at the school and its emphasis on educational outcomes, the Board, Principal, and Beacon Education Management will jointly determine the method for screening and interviewing applicants. With the guidance of the Board and Beacon, the Principal will have full authority to determine employment.

All faculty and staff at the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will be screened in accordance with Indiana law. This will include a criminal background check and a child abuse registry check.

Professional Development Plan

The School will develop an Annual Professional Development Plan for all staff. The plan will focus staff development activities on the following:

- Building organizational capacity.

- Areas of need as indicated by assessment results.

Each staff member shall have a personal professional development plan that reflects the school's needs and the staff member's individual needs.

A Day in the Life of a Teacher

Ms. Hubbard, the 4th grade teacher described in Section II.C, arrives at school by 6:45 a.m. Upon arrival she heads to the faculty lounge, where she meets with the other 4th grade teachers for 15 minutes to discuss upcoming lesson plans and a field trip that the grade is scheduling for next week. They end the meeting with each of them agreeing to complete a task related to the development of the lesson plan. Ms. At 7:00 a.m., Hubbard then heads to her classroom, where she prepares to supervise the early childhood history club's before school program that meets once a week. By 7:15 students ranging from grades K-4 start to enter her room, including John, one of her 4th grade students. Ms. Hubbard breaks the students into small groups of mixed grade levels and asks them to work together on the computers in Ms. Hubbard's classroom to research the clothes worn in ancient Carthage for a skit that the History club is preparing for an upcoming meeting of the School's Board of Directors. From 7:15 to 8:15 Ms. Hubbard supervises the twelve students in her classroom, while she collects her thoughts and puts the finishing touches on her course material for the day. At 8:00, Ms. Hubbard meets with the students to discuss their research and circulates a homework assignment for the students to work on for the next week's session. By 8:15 the students have left for their day-time classrooms. At 8:15 Ms. Hubbard move to the parking lot to help supervise student drop-off during as the school buses arrive. At promptly 8:30, Ms. Hubbard returns to her classroom, invites the students to stand at their desks, and the entire class recites the Pledge of Allegiance. Once the students have taken their seats, Ms. Hubbard begins working with the students on the History of Africa project described in Section II.C.

Once the teams of students have completed their work on the Africa project for the morning, the class will take a short recess to allow the students to release some energy and refocus for the rest of the morning's projects. If the weather is nice, this might involve some time on the School's new playground equipment that was donated by a prominent local

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business. When they return to the classroom, Ms. Hubbard will work with the students on another project until lunch time. At noon, Ms. Hubbard leads her class quietly to the lunchroom where the students will eat either a meal they have brought with them or one of the meals offered at the school. The first and second grade teachers are supervising lunch today, and the third and fourth grade teachers have the lunch hour to work together on lesson plans.

Once together with the other fourth grade teachers, Ms. Hubbard works with her colleagues to finalize plans for the upcoming field trip and takes time to visit with some of the third grade teachers who are sharing the faculty lounge. At the end of the lunch hour, Ms. Hubbard returns to the lunchroom to collect her students and lead them back to the classroom for the afternoon session. From 1 o'clock to 2 o'clock, she works with the students on a math project, and at 2 o'clock, she leads the student to the technology lab for a one hour technology session. From 2 o'clock until 3 o'clock, Ms. Hubbard works in her classroom on lesson plans for the following week and reviews a three the math homework the students handed in earlier in the day. At 3 o'clock, Mr. Enrick, the technology instructor brings the students back to Ms. Hubbard's classroom. From 3 o'clock until 3:30, she returns the math homework to the students, goes over some of the common issues that challenged her students, and asks them to have their parents review the her comments on the homework and to initial the pages. She reminds the students that she will expect them to return the pages tomorrow with a parent's signature.

At 3:30, she leads her students to the parking lot to load the buses. By 4:00 she is back in her classroom, setting up for tomorrow. She ends her day at school with a quick meeting with Mr. Enrick to discuss the technology lesson on which her students are working.

That evening, Ms. Hubbard goes home to her family, spends some quality time with her children and helps them with their homework. Once they have gone to bed, Ms. Hubbard turns on her laptop computer that the school provided to her, check her e-mail, revise a piece of the technology project-based on her conversation with Mr. Enrick, and enters student performance data into the Instructional Information Management System. Once her work is completed, she finishes her evening routine.

E. Financial Management

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will keep daily attendance records on each student and will provide such information to Indianapolis Public Schools on a regular schedule as agreed to by both parties. Further, the school will identify and provide the local district with the names and numbers of students eligible for categorical funding and funding for free and reduced price lunches. Identification of students will be the sole responsibility of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence.

Start-up Funding

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will apply for available state and federal start-up grants. Beacon Education Management will provide additional start-up funds as a reimbursable expense in the Board's annually approved budget. The forecasted start-up expenses include:

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Faculty and Administration Recruitment Costs,
Advertising,
Principal Salary and Benefit, four months,
Administrative Assistant Salary and Benefits, four months,
Student Recruitment Marketing,
Staff Development – pre-opening phase (stipends, material, trainers),
Printing,
Legal,
Initial Facility Development.

Five-year Financial Plan

An annual budget for the first five-years of the Indianapolis Academy of Excellence's operation is attached as **Attachment IV.D**. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence agrees to use accounting practices consistent with the Indiana financial accounting practices and will make provisions to have an annual audit conducted by a locally respected CPA firm. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence reserves the right to contract with the local school board, community partners or state agencies for services. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence also reserves the right to accept grants, gifts and donations as a public educational institution. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence acknowledges its right to both state and federal funding for students identified with disabilities.

The following is a capsule summary explanation of the methods for estimating revenues and expenses and plans to manage revenue deficits or other contingencies. Revenues are estimated using the \$6,700 estimated base per-pupil funding provided by ProjectE. No assumptions have been made regarding receipts from fundraising or competitive grants beyond the federal start-up grants, with a maximum assumed annual grant of \$80,000. Expenses are estimated by using Indianapolis averages where possible, by using estimates both from other Beacon managed charter schools, and from bid solicitation whenever appropriate.

A contingency reserve is built into the school budget to allow for budget variance. Beacon Education Management will manage the school's cash flow and will obtain a line of credit to cover any budgetary shortfalls between payments for public funding to the school.

Fundraising

The Board recognizes that there are a number of needs that our school will have and that it will be important for us to develop a sound fundraising approach to help us meet these needs. The Board is in the process of identifying our anticipated needs and selecting an appropriate fundraising approach for each need. For example, the Board anticipates needing about \$5,000 for physical education equipment and about \$150,000 for computers and technology, the Board will work to obtain donations to cover some of these types of "one-time" expenses to free up operating revenues for other purposes. The Board is contemplating a parent and community focused fundraising approach for the physical education equipment and a charitable foundation approach to raising the technology funds. On an ongoing basis, the

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Board will revise the School's fundraising program to reflect both our needs and the likely sources for the types of funds the Board is seeking.

F. Facility

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence Board of Directors, assisted by Beacon Education Management, will identify, investigate and secure appropriate real estate opportunities. Our goal is to find appropriate sites that will allow us not only to meet the mission of providing a quality education to the students, but also to be a positive and stabilizing influence in the neighborhood in which the Board is located.

The Board recognizes that at the School's maximum forecasted enrollment in year 7 of its operations, the School may be serving almost 900 students in grades K-12. Because the Board places a premium on creating a strong sense of community within our school, it will work to create several smaller learning segments within the School community. For example, the Board may eventually choose to operate the School from multiple sites within the community, e.g. an early childhood campus of K-5th graders with about 400 students, a middle-school campus of 6-8th graders with about 225 students, and a secondary campus of 9-12th graders with about 300 students. The Board also will explore implementing a pod concept into our facility design to allow similar aged students to create their own community within our building.

The initial site selection process is being directed by the following guideline preferences:

- Located within the City of Indianapolis.

- Access to public bus routes within a three-block walk. This will help ensure access to all interested parents and students, and will help guarantee a diverse population.

- Location in a residential area of sufficient size to support the school, and/or close to a bus stop that the transportation system services and/or be on traveled routes that allow parents to drop off and pick up children on the way to and from work.

- Capacity to initially accommodate 325 to 375 students. We estimated the size of the school could be 40,000 to 60,000 square feet upon full enrollment, including ancillary needs such as recreational and athletic facilities, cafeteria facilities, community room and daycare space and other needs. We also want to ensure that future expansion is possible. An area of about 40,000 square feet is forecasted for year one.

- Potential for expansion as our school grows over time.

- Green/recreation space either on-site or within a few minutes walk.

- The ability to achieve both building inspection approval and comply with all environmental regulations.

- Adequate on site parking.

- Adequate space for parent/ bus drop off.

- Economic factors of these facilities must be at or below market norm and make financial sense within the school's facility budget.

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The general area in which the school is located should define a neighborhood, which would include a concentration of residential homes, a viable commercial area, supermarkets, and other typical factors. The Board believes that beyond the quality education our school will provide, there also will be positive neighborhood and economic benefits.

As sites are identified, Beacon will follow this process:

A fire Marshall walk-through is scheduled

A licensed architect is scheduled to review the property

Beacon will determine if this is a lease or purchase opportunity

If this is a lease-only opportunity, then the architect will determine the build out costs. Beacon will ask contractors to submit proposals to the Board of Directors, which will determine which contracts to award.

Once the renovation estimates are determined, Beacon will assist the Board in negotiating the actual lease so as to maximize return on the facility improvements relative to the lease cost.

In each instance, the Board would be the lessee. Beacon may provide start-up loans as may be required in this process. The budget includes the assumed leasing and build-out costs.

G. Transportation

Ensuring that the School provides a real educational option to all eligible students is one of our highest priorities. The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence will see that the transportation needs of enrolled students are met. Once the random selection of the student body is made, the school will create a transportation plan to meet the needs of those students. The Board anticipates using a combination of parent provided and school provided transportation. The Board will encourage each family to work with us to meet the transportation needs of each student and each family. The Board is exploring the possibility of providing traditional bus style transportation to students living within Marion County but outside of a small radius from our school. The Board will also explore non-traditional transportation alternatives, such as the use of existing public mass-transit. As discussed in Section II.C, the Board is planning to design our school day so that parents have the option of bringing their children to school on their way to work (drop-off as early as 7:00 a.m.) and picking their children up on their way home from work (pick-up as late as 6:00 p.m.). The Board is exploring these options as a way to make sure that we make our education program open to every student and every family.

H. Risk Management

The Board believes that there are four aspects of risk management: (i) identification of potential risks, (ii) developing procedures and systems to minimize the likelihood of each potential risk, (iii) developing contingency plans in case an event occurs, and (iv) making sure there are adequate financial resources to cover the liability and cost of such events should they occur.

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Beacon has identified the potential risks to charter schools and has developed a School Operations Manual that contains procedures and contingency plans to prepare for those risks. In addition, we anticipate adopting formal risk management policies to provide a framework for school operations in case an event should occur. The Board is also working with insurance providers to develop an insurance program to cover the anticipated costs of the types of risks that may face our school and our board.

Type of Coverage	Minimum Amount
Commercial General Liability	Each Occurrence - \$1,000,000 Personal and Advertising Injury Limit - \$1,000,000 General Aggregate - \$5,000,000 Products - completed operations aggregate - \$5,000,000 Medical Expense - \$10,000
Umbrella (Excess Liability)	Each Occurrence - \$5,000,000 General Aggregate - \$5,000,000
Workers Compensation	Bodily Injury - accident - \$100,000 each accident Bodily Injury - disease - \$100,000 per employee \$500,000 policy limit.
Auto Liability	Combined single limit \$1,000,000 each accident
Errors and Omissions/School Leaders	Aggregate limit \$5,000,000

A copy of an insurance binder for these policy amounts is attached at **TAB 8**.

I. Proposed Timeline

A proposed timeline highlighting the major action items that must be addressed prior to opening day is attached below. The timeline also highlights the general time frame for each action item.

SITE SELECTION TIMELINE

Review/discuss site needs
Assess market options
Visit prospective sites
Cost estimates of prospective sites.
Negotiate preliminary terms
Assess financing options
Fire code & safety review of prospective sites
Negotiate final terms and sign lease or purchase agreement
Secure financing: if required
Building Design and Specifications
Fire Marshall approval (Health/ADA /Electrical)
Construction/up fit

TARGET DATE

Sept-Nov
Sept-Dec
Sept-Dec
Sept-Dec
Sept-Dec
March/April
Feb/Mar/Apr
Mar
Mar
Mar
July
April - Aug

DEVELOP MARKETING PLAN TIMELINE

Develop proposal for Board approval
Board approval of proposal

Nov-Dec
Dec

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Design advertising materials	Dec
Community Meeting	Jan-Aug
Advertise	Jan-Aug
Enroll Students using Beacon procedures	Feb-Aug

SCHOOL DIRECTOR SELECTION

Determine Board Requirements/Salary	Feb
Advertise for School Director	Feb
Receive applications	Feb/Mar
Paper screen candidates using Beacon procedures	Feb/Mar
Telephone interview	Feb/Mar
Initial visits/structured interviews	Feb/Mar
Secondary visits/parents (if available) and charter board interview	Feb/Mar
Background reference checks	Mar
Site visit to candidate's current school: if applicable	Feb/Mar
Board selection	Mar
Criminal background check	Mar
Hire and contract	Mar
Beacon training of School Director	Mar-Aug

INITIAL TEACHING STAFF SELECTION TIMELINE

Advertise needed positions and solicit	Mar-Aug
Recruit staff at college fairs/universities	Mar-Aug
Review Resumes	Mar-Aug
Decide/create salary ranges and compensation approach	April/May

TEMP STAFF / OFFICE

Locate temporary office	Feb/Mar
Hire temporary staff: if needed	Feb/Mar
Install fax, phone, computer	Mar
Train temporary staff in Beacon procedures: if needed	Mar
Open temporary office	Apr

OFFICE MANAGER

Advertise position	Feb/Mar
Interview Office Manager Candidates	Feb/Mar
Select Office Manager	Feb/Mar
Train Office Manager	Mar-Apr

NON PROFESSIONAL STAFF TIME LINE

Review staff selection process	Apr-Aug
Paper screen candidates	Apr-Aug
Structured interviews	Apr-Aug
Background/reference checks	Apr-Aug
Finalize selections	Apr-Aug
Hire and Contract	Apr-Aug
Criminal Background checks	Apr-Aug

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CURRICULUM

Beacon Ed. Team member to meet with Board for Curriculum review	Feb/Mar
Beacon Ed. team to develop "draft" curriculum for Board review	
Board approves curriculum proposal	Mar
Beacon Ed. team develops curriculum guide	Mar-June
Board approval of curriculum guide	June
Determine classroom resources for curriculum implementation	June
Staff In-Service - 2-3 weeks	Aug
Establish Ed. goals (4-5)	Feb

CLASSROOM and OFFICE FURNITURE

Assess furniture needs	Mar/Apr
Order furniture	May

CLASSROOM AND OFFICE SUPPLIES

Assess supply needs	Apr
Order supplies	May

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Develop and Approve Marketing Approach	Oct-Dec
Develop open enrollment packet that includes: calendar, school info, lunch forms, application, mission, and overview of educational program	Nov-Dec
Implement Marketing Approach	Jan
Conduct first Admissions Lottery	Feb 1
Conduct additional Admissions Lotteries (1 st of Each Month)	Mar-Aug

FOOD SERVICES TIMELINE

Review lunch offerings	Apr-Aug
Include MDE free/reduced guidelines in Enrollment package	Apr-Aug
Determine breakfast and lunch options	Apr-Aug
Identify free/reduced lunch students - DOE	Apr-Aug
Solicit bids/select vendor	Apr-Aug
Train staff on collection procedure	Apr-Aug
Inform parents of collection procedures	Apr-Aug
Implement procedures for F/R lunch	Aug

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEEDS TIMELINE

Assess first aid resources	Jun
Develop staff first aid training	Aug
Bloodborne pathogen training/Right to know training	Aug
Medication policy and procedures for administering meds	Jul

STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING PROGRAMS

Train Office Manager	Mar
Determine Free & Reduce eligible students	Aug/Sep
At Risk review with Board & School Director	TBD

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Complete State At Risk application	TBD
Complete Title I application	TBD
Completion of Charter School Grant	TBD
Complete At Risk and Title 1 end of year reports	TBD

BUDGET

Develop preliminary 5 year Budget Plan	Sept
Develop budget with Board	Mar
Develop 5 year MTA projected budget	Feb
Board approval of tentative first year budget	Jan
Acquire leases for furniture/technology	May

TECHNOLOGY TIMELINE

Assess technology needs	Jan-Apr
Procure technology using BEM procedures	Mar-Sep
Internet	Apr
Assess administrative and student services software	Apr-May
Computer services/leases	Apr-Aug
Other technology	Apr-Aug
Develop school technology plan based on state guidelines	Apr-Aug
Internet wiring	Apr-Aug
Telephones	Apr-Aug
Establish LAN	Apr-Aug
Install main server's	Apr-Aug
Establish internet connectivity	Apr-Aug
Satellite Workstations	Apr-Aug
Install PC's	Apr-Aug
Install peripherals	Apr-Aug
Network linkages	Apr-Aug
Fax	Apr-Aug
Copier	Apr-Aug

The timeline and our working assumptions are based on our current beliefs and expectations as well as the experience of Beacon Education Management. As part of the development process for the School, the Board has attempted to identify the most significant action items and to provide reasonable timing estimates; however, we expect that the process and timing of many of these items will need adjusting as the Board periodically evaluates and updates the School's working assumptions.

V. GOALS

A. Academic Performance

While all of the academic goals the Board has set are important, there are two goals that we view as critical to the success of our school and our students. The two key academic performance objectives for our school are to ensure that all of our students are able to read and

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to assist our students in achieving measurable progress towards our academic goals in the areas of Fine and performing arts.

Reading

The School's fundamental academic performance goal for each of our students will be to ensure that they, at a minimum, develop reading skills commensurate with their grade level. Reading is the fundamental building block upon which all learning occurs. The School will place a heavy emphasis on ensuring that our students have sufficient fundamental reading skills to build upon. The academic performance goals and assessment methods are detailed in Section III.B and in Section III.D, respectively. With the planned extra emphasis on reading during our first years of operation, the Board hopes to demonstrate the most significant improvements in our students' ability to read materials, to comprehend written content, and to use reading as a tool for additional learning. The School will assess its success in achieving this goal in a number of ways, including: improvement in individual and aggregate post-test data as compared to pre-test data on a nationally recognized standardized test; observations by the administration and staff, in class assessments, such as reading aloud; and formal and informal surveys of students, parents, and staff.

Fine and Performing Arts

The second academic performance goal is to ensure that our students master the fundamental concepts and processing abilities inherent in fine and performing arts skills. It is also our goal to use our fine and performing arts focus to engage students and to spark their interest to learn. We will use arts based project to teach a broad array of subjects, including English, history, and math. By using an exciting subject matter to teach academic areas that are often viewed as less interesting by the typical American student, we hope to make the learning process more enjoyable and engaging to our students. Our general academic performance goals and assessment methods are detailed in Section III.B and in Section III.D, respectively. Its is the School's goal to show significant measurable improvement in student test scores in all areas by the end of the first year of operations and to continue demonstrating relative improvement in all areas when compared to similar school in the Indianapolis metropolitan area. The School will assess its success in achieving this goal in a number of ways, including: improvement in individual and aggregate post-test data as compared to pre-test data on a nationally recognized standardized test; observations by the administration and staff, in class assessments, such as portfolio reviews; the response to performances and other displays of student work for the general public; and formal and informal surveys of students, parents, and staff.

B. Organizational Viability

The two key viability objectives for our school are to attract and maintain a diverse and robust student population and to attract and maintain a world-class, enthusiastic, dedicated board of directors, faculty, and administration. The Board understands the importance of these two elements in creating a viable academic institution. These goals will be measured independently, both objectively and subjectively to help us ensure that the Board is creating a world-class academic institution that will provide our students and our community with an excellent educational option long into the future.

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Our Student Population Goal

The School's student population goals will be measured by our annual student enrollment, average daily attendance, and re-enrollment rates. It is our goal to have a stable annual enrollment that is at or near our capacity and an enrollment applicant pool that will allow us to fill any vacancies in a timely manner. We expect our average daily attendance rates to exceed the average attendance rate within the traditional Indianapolis Public School system. The Board also expects an extremely high re-enrollment rate among our students. The combination of these three factors will help us ensure that the Board is being responsible stewards for the educational opportunities of our students. These three elements also will allow us to measure our success in different manners and at different time periods. The School plans to track these types of data and to conduct supplemental research, perhaps in the form of parent and student questionnaires and surveys, to help make sure the Board is meeting the needs of our students and fulfilling the commitments the Board is making in this Charter Proposal.

Our Board, Faculty and Administration Goal

The pillars of every organization's viability rest on the shoulders of its leadership. The Board has assembled a tremendous leadership team to develop and operate the School, and our ability to maintain the quality of that team will be the most critical element in the School's long-term viability and success. The Board selected this structure to ensure that it is always evolving and renewing itself by inviting motivated civic leaders to share their expertise and experience with the School.

C. School Specific Objectives

The two key school specific objectives are to attract and retain a world-class team of education professionals and to create an achievement oriented learning environment:

A World-class Team of Education Professionals

The Board believes that the foundation to our school's success is the quality of the administration, faculty, and staff that we attract to our school. We will aggressively seek to attract a high caliber, motivated and innovative team of education professionals to serve our students. We anticipate offering competitive salaries as compared to regional averages and will consider implementing creative merit-based compensation and bonus structures to align the incentives of our educators with the needs of their students and the educational goals of our school. We will measure our success in recruiting a world-class faculty, staff, and administration by tracking the institutions from which our education professionals earned their degrees, their academic performance throughout their education, and their performance on the job and in the classroom. We will measure our success in retaining our education professionals by conducting surveys designed to ensure that they are satisfied with the various aspects of the school and their job. The School will conduct exit interviews with any team member that elects to leave the School and will evaluate the performance of each education professional to ensure that everyone in the school meets the high standards and expectations that are placed on them.

A World-Class Learning Environment

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Creating and maintaining a world-class learning environment is an important component of several aspects of our mission and vision. The Board believes it is important that our school offers our students a warm, exciting place to learn and offers our education professionals a functional and exciting place to work. The Board is in the process of evaluating several facility options and are in the initial phase of identifying funding sources for a substantial renovation to several of the facilities that the Board is considering. The School will measure our success at creating a positive learning environment by the atmosphere that is created in the school and by feedback from parent, staff, and student surveys about the learning environment.

VI. SUMMARY AND STRENGTHS

The Indianapolis Academy of Excellence has significant strengths that distinguish it from other academic institutions in Indianapolis.

1. The School's education program is both innovative in its approach and tested in its results. The Core Knowledge Sequence based curriculum has proven highly successful in urban environments, like Indianapolis. The positive outcomes are confirmed by a large body of research and by the results of the implementation of the LightPoints Curriculum™ in other charter schools across the country.
2. The School's instructional approach provides every student with an Individual Learning Plan that allows the School to tailor the educational program to the needs of each student. The instructional approach also uses a balanced approach built on a teacher directed, project-based learning model that is well suited to the structure of the School's academic program.
3. The School features a character education component emphasizing integrity, diligence, fairness, kindness, self-respect, friendship, and tolerance. The School will provide a clear set of guidelines and expectations and will apply those guidelines and expectations in a fair and consistent manner starting on the first day of class.
4. The School is working with Beacon Education Management. Beacon brings to the School the experience of its operations in 29 charter schools across the country, along with significant knowledge and expertise in school development, operations, and finance. Under the Board's supervision, Beacon will ensure the School operates in an efficient and effective manner for the betterment of the students.
5. The Board of Directors is a dedicated group of citizens that are committed to the proposition that an education in core subject areas with a focus on fine and performing arts is a recipe for improving students' knowledge, understanding, and ability to learn.

We look forward to working with you to create an exciting new school in Indianapolis.